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(69) *Magic, Stage Illusions and Scientific Diversions, including Trick Photography.* ALBERT A. HOPKINS, N. Y 1897, pp. 56.

The claim of the preface that "this work occupies a unique field in the extensive literature of magic," is well founded. No book has ever before appeared that dealt with these matters in so full and clear a manner. A few books claiming to give *exposés* of stage tricks etc., have been published, but usually they, like the tricksters themselves, have only divulged the secrets of a few worn-out illusions, and have left the great mass still a mystery, and the reader in doubt whether the more startling feats are not, after all, the effects of "occult" powers or "spirits." In this case, however, the author has given us a clear and scientific explanation of all kinds of legerdemain and stage illusions as they appear to the spectator and as they exist behind the scenes.

It is useless to attempt, in a brief review, to give any adequate idea of what the book contains, so full is it of interesting matter.

The introduction by H. R. Evans gives a brief history of magic from earliest times. The five sections of the book are devoted to (I) Conjurors' Tricks and Stage Illusions, (II) Ancient Magic, (III) Science in the Theatre, (IV) Automata and Curious Toys, (V) Photographic Diversions (including trick photography and spirit photography). Nearly every explanation is accompanied by one or more illustrations, so that every detail is made perfectly intelligible.

One is unable to decide which is to be admired more, the absurd simplicity or the elaborate preparation upon which the different tricks depend for their success. Such tricks as the "animated mouse" or "slate writing" illustrate the former, while "disappearances" of many and diverse forms, as well as sudden reappearances, depend upon the latter plan. A good illustration, however, of elaborate preparation is seen in "second sight" or mind reading. For the performance of this feat an elaborate system of signs is used, requiring, one would say, *months* to learn and make perfect by practice. But when once it is perfected, a little skillful questioning which creates no suspicion on the part of the audience, is all that is necessary to give the operator all she needs to know—all that she gives back to them as the result of her "remarkable" powers.

Presumably all theatre-goers know that many realistic effects are produced by elaborate machinery. But it may be doubted if very many of even constant attenders are aware *how* elaborate, and least of all by what means, the different effects are produced. All this is explained in the section devoted to it.

In fire-eating, sword-swallowing and sword-walking, we pass from trickery pure and simple to the realm of marvels accomplished by pure skill on the part of the operator. The sword is actually swallowed and its point reaches to the bottom of the stomach. We are here told how it is done.

Space will not permit of further mention of marvelous and interesting things herein contained. The work is valuable and timely. The psychologist will find here, ready prepared, many illustrations of psychic principles. To one studying the psychology of occultism the facts here given will prove very valuable. Teacher and parent alike will find it useful, since one can hardly imagine anything more calculated to stimulate a boy's imagination and ingenuity than such a mine of marvelous feats that he can learn to perform, interesting toys that he can make, which are at once instructive, fascinating and innocent. The facts set forth constitute a forcible proof that our organs of sense are not infallible, and secondly, it is evident—

a fact that has been too little appreciated in all discussion of such matters—that no expense of time or money is spared, or scientific principle neglected, in order to produce something that shall pass for marvelous.

A bibliography of 160 authors will be appreciated by psychologists and all others who may wish to investigate the subject. G.

(70) *Les éléments du caractère et leurs lois de combinaison.* By PAULIN MALAPERT. Alcan, Paris, 1897, pp. 302.

Every one interested in the subject of Mr. Malapert will find this book very profitable reading. The author is not very original, a fact which he himself acknowledges again and again; and he does not claim that he proposes a classification which is worthy of being called new. But he offers a very conscientious study; he knows his subject thoroughly, and, it seems to me, that he is especially successful in his mild criticism of authors who have dealt with this subject before.

First of all Mr. Malapert denies the necessity of considering the physiological aspect of the question as the basis of the whole problem. He proves clearly that even the authors who advanced physiological causes were finally forced to admit that they, after all, really used psychical arguments in their studies and especially in the classification of characters. Pages 7-9, he gives a very good criticism of Mr. Fouillée's theory of temperament, founded on biological causes. Pages 14-15, he gives his own point of view.

Where have we to study character? Mr. Malapert admits that the nucleus of character is individual, and is innate with us. The external conditions, milieu, climate, etc., may only modify, but do not create this primitive nucleus. (He tries to show here that H. Taine, who has often used a very sharp language indeed, has been generally misunderstood.) It would seem, then, that the place where the very essence of the character is to be studied is with the child. But, says Mr. Malapert, there character has not yet had occasion to manifest itself. On the contrary, only with the adult we may study character in its whole development: at the age of twenty or twenty-five, but not earlier, man has had occasion to show all the different aspects of his character.

*First Part.* In order to avoid the one-sided theories on character found with his predecessors, Mr. Malapert, before offering a classification of character as a whole, proposes four classifications, one for each element constituting the character as a whole. Classification according to sensitiveness, to intelligence, to automatic will, and to voluntary (that is, conscious) will. All of these classifications rest on a single principle, that of *more and less*. I can not enter into any details here; there are a great many sub-divisions for each of these large classes.

*Second Part.* This part gives us the laws of the combination of the elements of the character, the different degrees of sensitiveness of intelligence, and so on. Like the rest of the book this part also is worked out very carefully. But there is no strict order in the arrangement of the matter. This is not meant as a reproach, for, if such order existed, it would presuppose a single principle to direct us. But as Mr. Malapert himself recognizes, we have not yet advanced so far in the study of character as to arrive at unity. The fourth chapter shows this very clearly. After a short exposition of the most valuable classifications of character made within the last few years, and an excellent criticism of the most important failures in each, the author offers, as being the best within the present reach, a combination of the theories of MM. Fouillée and